NEWS FROM THE FOOD AND DRUG ADMINISTRATION

An interview between W. G. Campbell, Chief of the Federal Food and Drug Administration, and Morse Salisbury, Acting Director of Information, United States Department of Agriculture, broadcast Tuesday, August 23, 1938, in the Department period of the National Farm and Home Hour by a network of 90 stations associated with the National Broadcasting Company.

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WALLACE KADDERLY:

Today Morse Salisbury has with him Mr. W. G. Campbell, Chief of the Federal Food and Drug Administration. Morse, I believe Mr. Campbell is already well known to the Farm and Home Hour audience.

MORSE SALISBURY:

Yes, I'm sure he is. We had the pleasure of hearing Mr. Campbell last January, when he reported on high lights in food and drug law enforcement under the "Pure Food Law" of 1906. Today he's going to tell us what the Food and Drug Administration has been doing since last June, when President Roosevelt signed the Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act. Mr. Campbell, how does it feel to have a new law -- at long last?

W. G. CAMPBELL:

Well, as yet, we're not quite used to it[illegible] Salisbury. We're learning a great deal -- especially about cosmetics.

SALISBURY:

Josephine Hemphill told us two weeks ago that you cracked down, pronto, on dangerous eyelash dyes like Lashlure and Magic-di-Stik.

CAMPBELL:

Miss Hemphill is right. Women seem to be greatly interested in the cosmetic provisions of the new Act.

SALISBURY:

Well, that's easy to understand, considering the amount of damage done by such cosmetics as Lashlure -- before the new law gave you the right to take it off the market. By the way, what are the names of the other eyelash dyes you've seized?

CAMPBELL:

To date, we have made more than 30 seizures. These include shipments of Lashlure and Magic-di-Stik, and a few of Loris, and Dark Eyes, a product called Roux -- R-o-u-x, and another known as Spiro's Oriental Colura. Congress recognized as surely as we did the tragically dangerous character of these eyelash dyes, and that's why Congress made the prohibition against this type of cosmetic effective immediately. As you know, Mr. Salisbury, most of the provisions of the new law become effective next year, on the 25th of June.

SALISBURY:

Yes, that gives the manufacturer time to get acquainted with the law, and adjust his business accordingly. But since the provision against dangerous cosmetics was made immediately effective, I take it your Administration felt it

SALISBURY: (Continued)
had a direction from the Congress to take instant action against Lashlure and Magic-di-Stik, and those others you mentioned.

CAMPBELL:
You are quite right. For many years, we've known that these eyelash dyes were dangerous, but we've been helpless to do anything, even when we saw the women who had been permanently blinded, after using Lashlure.

SALISBURY:
But now, under the new law, you're able to drive these products off the market, for good and all.

CAMPBELL:
We hope so. We think we've done a pretty complete job of driving this dangerous type of "beautifier" off the market, although we've learned from experience to be on guard all the time.

SALISBURY:
Mr. Campbell, I intended to start this interview by asking you about the new law, and how the Food and Drug Administration is going to enforce it. But I seem to have gotten ahead of my question. Incidentally, I know the Food and Drug Administration is busier than ever right now, and we're grateful to you for taking time out of your day to give us a report on the progress you're making toward enforcement of the new law.

CAMPBELL:
We're delighted to take the time, because we are working for the public, and we want the public to know what we are doing.

SALISBURY:
Now, we've mentioned only one of the provisions in the new law that became effective immediately -- the prohibition against dangerous cosmetics. Will you tell us the others?

CAMPBELL:
The two other provisions that became effective the day the bill was signed, on June 25th last, deal with dangerous drugs, and with the requirement that new drugs must be tested and found safe.

SALISBURY:
Of course those provisions go back to the tragedy in which more than a hundred people died after taking a new, untested drug -- called elixir sulfanilamide.

CAMPBELL:
Yes, that tragedy had a powerful effect in impressing Congress with the need for proper legislative control of new, untested drugs. The elixir case was followed by a similar occurrence last April, when many people died after treatment with another improperly tested drug. I am referring to the cancer-serum case.

SALISBURY:

Doctor Dunbar reviewed that particular case for us. Last January when you told us about the elixir deaths, you quoted a list of recommendations made by the Secretary of Agriculture, to Congress, at the request of Congress, to prevent such wholesale killings.

CAMPBELL:

Yes, these were recommendations for the control of new drugs, and to prohibit drugs dangerous when administered in accordance with the manufacturer's directions. Also, recommendations for stronger labels and warnings, and for prohibition of secret remedies. These recommendations were to benefit the patient, the physician, and the consumer who acts as physician to himself.

SALISBURY:

Now are these recommendations (the direct result of the elixir case) -- Are they written into the new law?

CAMPBELL:

They are. Congress took the elixir and cancer-serum tragedies seriously, and, in the interest of public safety, enacted strong provisions in regard to dangerous drugs, and in regard to new, untested drugs.

SALISBURY:

Now Mr. Campbell, you said that among other jobs keeping you and your colleagues busy, there's the job of formulating new food standards. There are several hundred food products on the market, so that means you'll need several hundred standards?

CAMPBELL:

That's just what it means. I'm sure you've seen the "Standards of Identity" we use as a guide in enforcing the Food and Drugs Act of 1906.

SALISBURY:

Yes, I have seen them. But they're not legal standards, like the standard, say, for butter, which is set up in a law.

CAMPBELL:

No, they're only advisory standards. The law of 1906 did not give the Secretary of Agriculture authority to set up standards which would have the full force and effect of law. But under the new law, standards for food products will have the force and effect of law.

SALISBURY:

Will you tell us how the consumer will benefit, by these legal standards for food products?

CAMPBELL:

Well, that's a long story. In brief, these standards will vastly simplify the task of proving in the courts that a common recognized food product is adulterated within the meaning of the law. Eventually, every food product for which a standard has been set up will be composed of just what the standard says.

SALISBURY:

And when that day comes, the housewife who buys strawberry preserves, to take one example -- will be sure she's getting strawberries and sugar, with no apple pulp thrown in to cheapen the article.

CAMPBELL:

Right. And tomato catsup will be tomato catsup -- no applesauce allowed. These standards will prevent the debasement of food products. The law will compel the employment of truthful and descriptive labeling. After the new standards are set up, the housewife will know that every food product for which there is no standard will have to bear a label giving the common or usual names of its important ingredients.

SALISBURY:

That means it will still be important to read labels.

CAMPBELL:

Yes, more important than ever before. Label-reading is going to be an interesting and worth-while pastime, after June 25, 1939. The housewife who wants to know the standards will have no trouble in learning about them when they are issued.

SALISBURY:

We're much obliged to you, Mr. Campbell, for taking time to tell us of the progress you're making under the new law.

WALLACE KADDERLY:

Farm and Home friends, you have heard W. G. Campbell, Chief of the Federal Food and Drug Administration, and Morse Salisbury, Acting Director of Information, discussing some of the work involved in enforcing the Pure Food Law of 1906 and the immediate provisions of the Food, Drug, and Cosmetic law of 1938.

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